

FOREWORD

This issue is exclusively devoted to the results of the Polish Scientific Expedition to Peru (PSEP) which is organized under the auspices of Rector AGH – The University of Science and Technology in Kraków. The monography presenting an initial report contains panorama of special papers of individual persons and teams.

The works are aimed at laying foundations for future national park in Peru, recognition of its natural and cultural resources: geology, landscape, living nature as well as ethnic and historical heritage, which should be protected and adequately provided for tourists.

PSEP enriches Polish exploration of the Andes and scientific output in Peru which were described in papers of Paradowska (1985)*), Dembicz & Smolana (1993) and Paulo (2007). Among geographical discoveries first place should be given to Cracow Student Paddler Expedition CANOANDES (Majcherczyk *et al.* 1981) who pioneered in flowing down Rio Colca Canyon, measuring its dimensions, proclaiming worldwide that it is the deepest canyon of our planet and in effect made it popular target of visits. Being proud of these achievements we feel responsible for protection of outstanding environmental amenities and stimulation of sustainable development of the region, eliminating depreciatory side effects.

In 2003 A. Gałaś and A. Paulo, staff of the Faculty of Geology, Geophysics and Environmental Protection AGH, performed a reconnaissance in the Valley of the Volcanoes (Gałaś & Paulo 2005), visited Canyon Colca, two Buenaventura gold mines, and established scientific relations with Universidad Nacional San Agustín in Arequipa (UNSA) and Instituto Geológico, Minero y Metalúrgico (INGEMMET) in Lima.

In 2004 at the same Faculty two projects were opened: research of Andahua volcanic group (A. Gałaś, A. Paulo, M. Wasilewski) and definition of geotouristic values in Canyon Colca region (M. Krzak, A. Kukuła-Góral, S. Bębenek). In 2005 M. Wasilewski alone has continued exploration for obsidiane sources for prehistoric tools found in the area.

In 2006 the circle of investigators was enlarged embracing 15 scientists from 7 centres, their scope of interests included geology, botany, culture and medicine. The team and its field activities are overviewed in this issue in paper of M. Głogowska & J. Krupa. Following papers present: infrastructure and economic development of the study area (A. Paulo & A. Gałaś), idea of nature protection (A. Paulo & A. Gałaś), geological outline (A. Paulo), geomorphology (T. Kalicki & J. Kukulak), tectonic activity (J. Żaba & Z. Małolepszy), recent volcanism (A. Gałaś), touristic values (B. Radwanek-Bąk), mineral medicine (M. Wasilewski), traditional medicine (Z. Ryn), and pioneering plants in the area (B. Cykowska & A. Flakus, K. Sobiech-Matura & M. Węgrzyn).

Year 2007 was foreseen for preliminary reporting and planning next stage of field studies. For 2008 the Spanish edition of this issue in the Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica de Lima is intended as well as broadened geological, geomorphological and biological studies in new sectors of Colca Canyon and its envelope, and establishing closer cooperation with relevant institutions and individuals of Peru. This shall effect in presenting preliminary project of the Canyon Colca and Valley of Volcanoes National Park.

*)) Bibliography is given in the paper of Gałaś & Paulo – Idea of protection of Canyon Colca and Valley of Volcanoes

A warm welcome given to PSEP team by INGEMMET and Arequipa and provincial authorities, as well as logistic support by CM Buenaventura is greatly acknowledged. We owe much to personal engagement of late Dr. S. Dunin-Borkowski, professor and tutor of generations of Peruvian geologists, Dr. M. Ziółkowski, professor of Arequipa and Warsaw Universities, kind-hearted Arequipa citizens Felix and Luisa Malaga and many others. Financial support of parental institutions, “Geosphere” Society, Polish-American Travelers Club and Friends of Kraków Society in New York facilitated organization of the expedition. The cost of present edition were covered by the Faculty of Geology, Geophysics and Environmental Protection AGH. Deep gratitude is expressed to all sponsors of this ambitions work, both up to date and future.

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